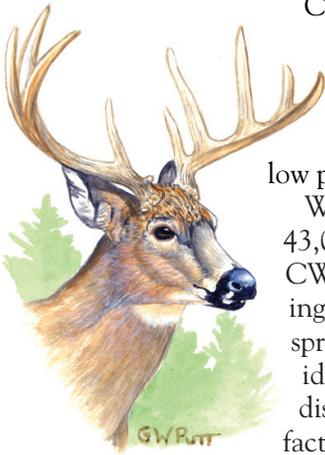


Moving Forward Together

Pennsylvania is learning to live with Chronic Wasting Disease, and all of us have a role moving forward.

CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE, a transmissible neurological prion disease affecting deer, has now been found in Pennsylvania. We had hoped that this day would never come. But it has. CWD was detected last fall in captive deer in Adams County, and later in free-ranging, hunter-killed deer in portions of Bedford and Blair counties. It's bad news for deer, for hunters and citizens, and presents a significant challenge for our agency.



CWD is unrelentingly persistent, a deadly disease with no cure. All members of the deer family are susceptible, and the natural lives of the afflicted are shortened dramatically. There is no live-animal test for CWD and it occurs in a patchy distribution at a low prevalence, so it's hard to find.

We've been checking for CWD since 1998; more than 43,000 deer and elk were examined without a hint of CWD. Then everything changed. Our job went from trying to keep CWD outside our borders to minimizing its spread to other parts of Pennsylvania. This will include identifying and removing infected animals; properly disposing of prion-contaminated parts and managing risk factors that contribute to the disease's spread.

Whitetails are important to Pennsylvania and Pennsylvanians. The white-tailed deer is our state animal. Deer hunting is a major economic force in this state with more than 700,000 participants who contribute more than \$1 billion annually to our economy. It's a resource that has always required—and demanded—our best. We will continue to give it.

CWD is bad news, but we shouldn't overreact. You should continue to enjoy deer, deer hunting and eat venison from healthy deer. And you should know we won't be trying to kill all free-ranging deer in any disease management area, setting up more check stations, or making it incredibly inconvenient to process a deer. We need your help. We'll be counting on hunters to cooperate with samples of harvested deer to help assess the presence and spread of CWD.

Your cooperation and willingness to help us respond to this new conservation challenge is vital. Everyone should become more informed about this disease and to help us limit its spread by handling deer parts properly, reporting sick deer and spreading the word. Other articles in this issue of *Game News* will help you better understand the disease and how you can limit its spread. Take the time. Read them. Then help us help whitetails.



Carl G. Roe
Executive Director